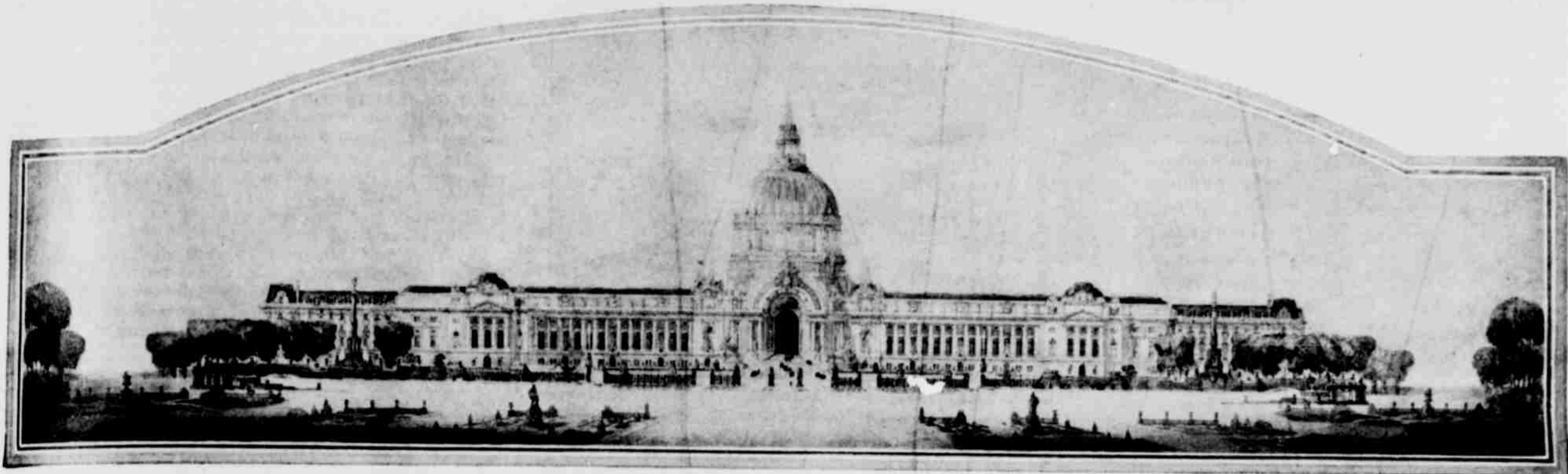


# Switzerland and the League of Nations

## Agitated Over Future Place in Family of Nations



Palace of League of Nations: Front Elevation of Design awarded First Grand Prix de Rome.

Geneva, Switzerland, December, 1919.

THE people of Switzerland will within another month decide by a popular vote whether or not they will enter the League of Nations. For nearly six weeks past the question has been much agitated in the press and in general conversation and the debates in the Federal Council, which resulted a few days ago in the decided vote of 128 to 43 for membership in the League, brought out some very interesting views. It will be remembered that within a week or so after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles the Swiss Government sent a communication to the Supreme Council of the Allies pointing out that certain clauses in the League Covenant would stand in the way of the membership of the mountain republic, imposing as they would an abandonment of the traditional policy of neutrality which almost from its birth has meant the very life of Switzerland and which made possible not only her own peaceful progress, but also her marked services along humanitarian lines to all the belligerents. It was accordingly suggested that some modification of the clauses in question might be possible.

The opponents of the adherence of Switzerland to the League laid stress on the argument that such adherence risked the loss of that neutrality which had been guaranteed in perpetuity to Switzerland by the Powers in the Treaty of 1815. To this it was well answered that, to all intents and purposes, the Treaty of 1815 was dead and Switzerland has contributed largely to its demise; that in the League of Nations Switzerland would be affiliated with an international organization for the preservation of world peace and find in that affiliation a guaranty, which her feebleness would not allow her to find in herself, for the integrity and inviolability of her territory.

There is little doubt that the referendum vote will confirm that of the National Council and of the Council of States in the Swiss Parliament. "To doubt the response of our people," said a prominent Swiss to me, "would be to doubt the very existence of this Confederation. Enlightened by those who comprehend the grandeur of the opportunity, the people will follow in fullest security the parliamentary democrats who, with a beautiful sense of patriotism, have looked to the future with the intelligent faith of those who know that, despite defects and their mistakes, Switzerland should be, in the midst of terrestrial conflicts, not only a soul of charity and love, but also a serene and lively conscience."

The only amendment to the resolution of adherence which found favor with the majority was that which entrusted not to the Federal Council, but to the Federal Assembly, the right to designate the three dele-

By PAUL TYNER

gates from Switzerland in the General Assembly of the League of Nations. This tentative for the further democratization of the League is one which is being called for also in many other countries, notably in Great Britain. M. de Rabours brought out during the debate in the National Council the close connection of Switzerland with the evolution of the idea of international solidarity in all its stages. The first great international, he said, was that of intellect created by the invention of printing in the sixteenth century. Following the Peace of Utrecht in 1713, the Abbé de Saint-Pierre, stirred by the atrocities of the war, proclaimed the interest of all peoples in the perpetuation of peace. It is the glory of Rousseau to have first proposed the proper means of realizing this project in the regeneration of society by the general adoption of democratic systems. It was partly, he said, in homage to Rousseau's memory that the states had chosen Geneva as the seat of the League of Nations.

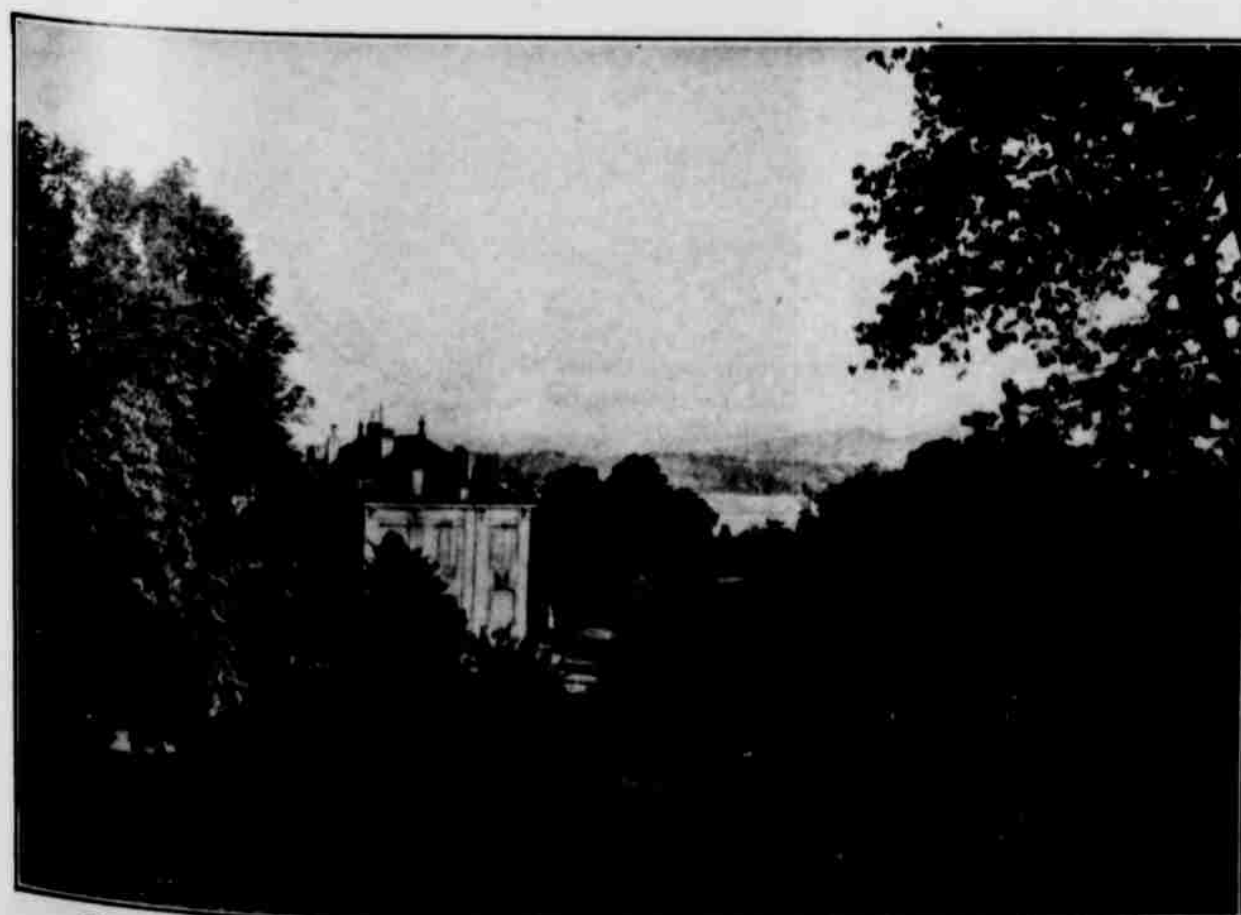
Concerning this designation of Geneva as the seat of the League, there is a very general feeling in Switzerland just now that one result of the American Senate's failure to ratify the Treaty would probably be the change of this designation to Brussels. This feeling was strengthened recently when representatives of the Secretariat of the League came to Geneva from London and positively, while not too politely, rejected the buildings which Geneva offered for the purpose and made strong objections even to the site beautifully situated on Lake Geneva at a short distance from the city. The criticism was made that the Genevese seemed to think the League would require buildings suitable for an international exposition.

It is certain that Geneva was President Wilson's choice and in view of the fact that Brussels is the seat of a monarchy and the residence of Bourbon and Bonapartist, pretenders to the throne of France, while Geneva is identified not only with peace and neutrality and the splendid international humanitarianism which brought the Red Cross into being, but also with pure democracy in tradition and in actual realization, his choice had reason behind it. Brussels was favored by both French and English delegates largely as a testimony of recognition for Belgium's brave part in the war. Italy was inclined to favor Geneva. Of course, with America out of the League of Nations the whole thing would be likely to degenerate into just such a pact of the European Powers as would relegate to the rear such considerations as swayed President Wilson.

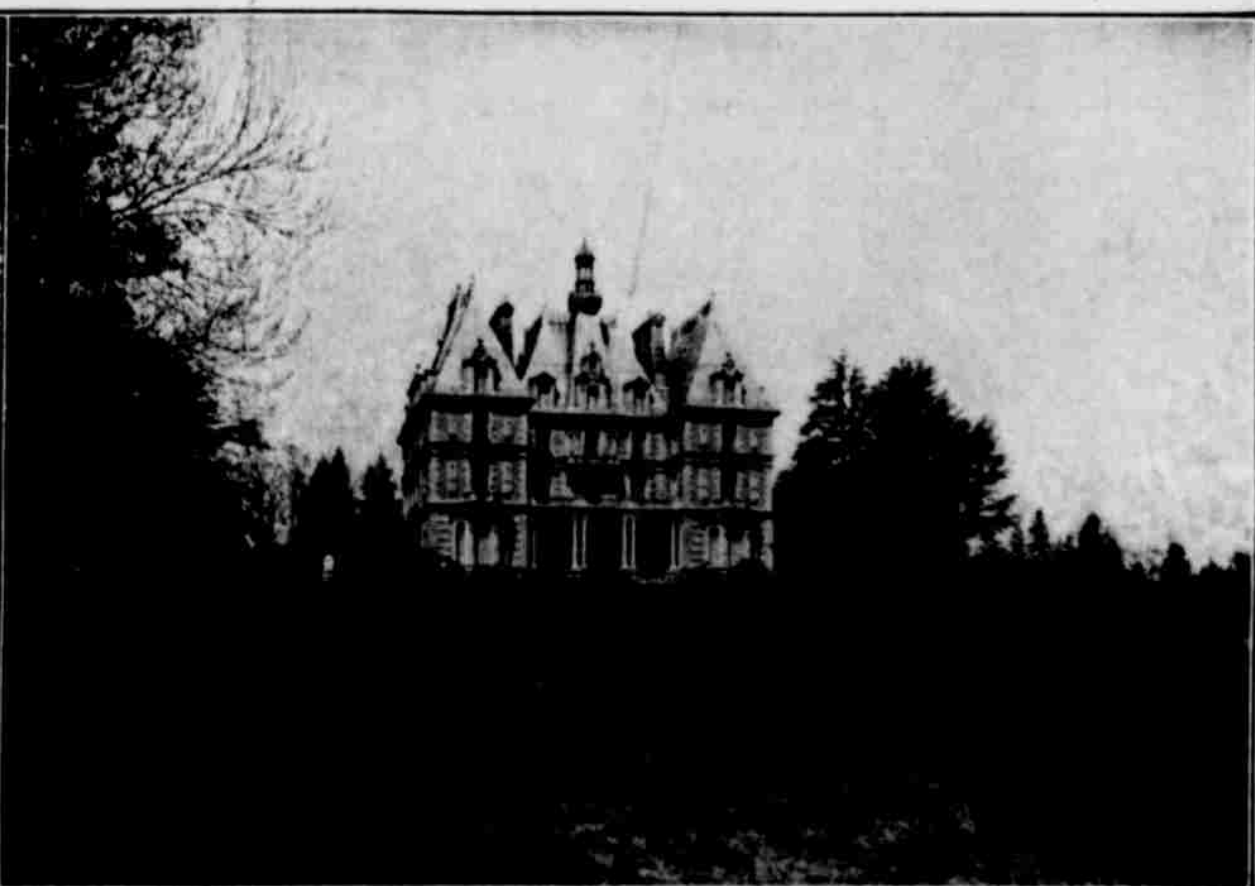
We are all hoping that the Senate will realize that the surest way to "Americanize" the pact is to act in the true American spirit, as the Swiss have identified the true Swiss national spirit with the world's peace and the furtherance of international solidarity on democratic bases.

With some recent views of the site offered by Geneva for the League of Nations, I am sending you photographs of the design for a Hall of the League of Nations which has just been awarded the Grand Prix de Rome for Architecture by the Paris École des Beaux Arts. This is probably the proudest distinction which an ambitious young art student could win. It carries with it full provision for four years' study of art in Rome. There were about a score of contestants and it is testimony to the inspiration of the subject that it was found necessary to divide the three prizes into "First-First," "Second-First" and "Third-First," and so on. The photographs herewith are of the "First-First" prize design won by Jacques Louis René Carlu. He is 29 years old, a pupil of Buquesne, Laloux and Recoura and won the American Students' Prize for Architecture in 1910. The second grand prize was won by Jean Jacques Haffner, a young Alsatian and pupil of Latour, who won the American Architects' Competition for the Stillman Prize in 1911. The winner of the "Third-First" prize was Eugene Alexander Girardin whose masters were Gaulin and Laloux. His designs for a public library and for an open air tribune have gained him honorable mention in earlier competitions.

All the designs presupposed the definite acceptance of the Geneva site, the ground plan of M. Carlu's design showing the lake front. The very imposing structure is supposed to cover an area almost equal to that of the Capitol at Washington. The architect has evidently succeeded in making it expressive symbolically of the great idea for which the League of Nations stands. In talking with him about it at the École des Beaux Arts, he impressed me by his modesty and was careful to have me understand that the plans prepared by him and his fellow students were worked out simply as a student's exercise and with no least idea of being actualized in concrete form. When it comes to the actual erection of the building or buildings that are to form the permanent home of the League of Nations, a competition in designs will doubtless be open to the architects of all nations and the definite result will embody the world's best thought in regard to beauty, fitness and adaptation to its uses. Nevertheless, I have an idea that this Prix de Rome competition, open only to French architects, will furnish valuable pointers to the competitors in the larger tournament of brains and artistic skill.



The Chateau de Saussure: Smaller Building on Site of League of Nations at Geneva.



Chateau Bartholoni: On Site offered for Seat of League of Nations at Geneva.